

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-58. (Canceled)

59. (New) A video surveillance and monitoring system comprising:

a private network that enables communication with surveillance cameras corresponding to monitored sites;

wherein at least two surveillance cameras correspond to distinct monitored sites; and

a centralized control site, including at least one server, said at least one server being coupled to said private network and to a public network, said at least one server being operative to initialize communications between the surveillance cameras and at least one off-site client workstation coupled to said public network, to coordinate the retrieval of video images from all said surveillance cameras, to produce said retrieved video images as live images to the at least one off-site client workstation, and to enable off-site client workstations to effect communication with selected surveillance cameras, wherein the off-site client workstation cannot initialize communication with the surveillance cameras.

60. (New) The system of Claim 59; wherein said private network is a virtual private network configured over a public network.

61. (New) The system of Claim 59, wherein said private network is coupled to a camera server and said camera server is coupled to one or more surveillance cameras.

62. (New) The system of Claim 61, wherein said one or more surveillance cameras produces composite NTSC video signals and wherein the camera server is operable to capture the NTSC video signals and convert the captured NTSC video signals.

63. (New) The system of Claim 59, wherein one of said surveillance cameras comprises a self-contained Web server and network camera.

64. (New) The system of Claim 59, wherein said public network is a public Internet network.

65. (New) The system of Claim 59, wherein said at least one server is operative to repeatedly store live video image data to a file that is retrievable by a client workstation.

66. (New) The system of Claim 65, wherein said at least one server is operative to write live video image data to a temporary file and to rename said temporary file to said file that is retrievable by a client workstation.

67. (New) The system of Claim 59, wherein said at least one server is operative to receive and process a camera command control code that identifies a user's desired type of camera adjustment.

68. (New) The system of Claim 67, wherein said camera control code identifies an absolute pan-tilt-zoom control.

69. (New) The system of Claim 67, wherein said camera control code identifies a relative pan-tilt-zoom control.

70. (New) The system of Claim 67, wherein said at least one server is operative to receive and process an encoded Internet Protocol address of a camera server.

71. (New) The system of Claim 67, wherein said at least one server is operative to convert a received camera control code to a binary-coded command string and to forward said binary-coded command string to an identified surveillance camera.

72. (New) The system of Claim 71, wherein said binary-coded command string is forwarded to a camera server, which in turn forwards said binary-coded command string to a surveillance camera.

73. (New) The system of Claim 71, wherein said binary-coded command string is forwarded to a self-contained Web server and network camera.

74. (New) The system of Claim 71, wherein said binary-coded command string is forwarded to a separately-addressable device that is solely responsible for receiving camera control commands.

75. (New) A video surveillance and monitoring system, the system comprising:
a plurality of video monitoring devices, each monitoring device generating video monitoring data corresponding to a monitored site, wherein the plurality of video monitoring devices generates live video data and receives control instructions corresponding to a position of the video monitoring device, and wherein at least two video monitoring devices of the plurality of video monitoring devices correspond to distinct monitored sites;

a centralized control site in communication with the plurality of video monitoring devices via a private communication, wherein the centralized control site retrieves live video data from the plurality of video monitoring devices; and

at least one client workstation remote from the plurality of video monitoring devices and in communication with the centralized control site via public communication network, wherein the client workstation requests monitoring device data from at least one monitored site and wherein the client workstation initiates video monitoring communications;

wherein the centralized control site associates at least one of the plurality of video monitoring devices to the client workstation requests and initializes communications between the at least one client workstation and the associated video monitoring device, wherein the client workstation cannot directly access the associated video monitoring device without an initialization by the centralized control site.

76. (New) The system as recited in Claim 75, wherein the private network is a virtual private network configured over a public network.

77. (New) The system as recited in Claim 75, further comprising a camera server corresponding to a geographic area and coupled to at least one video monitoring device corresponding to the geographic area, wherein the camera server is further coupled to the private network to facilitate communications with the, centralized control site.

78. (New) The system as recited in Claim 77, wherein the plurality of video monitoring devices produces composite NTSC video signals and wherein the camera servers are operable to capture the NTSC video signals and convert the captured NTSC video signals.

79. (New) The system as recited in Claim 75, wherein the plurality of video monitoring devices includes at least one self-contained Web server and network camera.

80. (New) The system as recited in Claim 75, wherein the centralized control site writes live video image data from the plurality of the video monitoring devices to a temporary file, wherein the temporary file is retrievable by a client workstation.

81. (New) The system as recited in Claim 75, wherein the at least one client workstation video monitoring control instructions includes an identification of an absolute pan-tilt-zoom control.

82. (New) The system as recited in Claim 75, wherein the client workstation video monitoring control instructions include identification of a relative pan-tilt-zoom control.

83. (New) The system as recited in Claim 75, wherein the centralized control site converts a client workstation video monitoring control instruction into a binary-coded command string and forwards the binary-coded command string to a selected video monitoring device.

84. (New) The system as recited in Claim 75, wherein the centralized control site generates camera control codes instructing one or more of the plurality of video monitoring devices to move to predefined positions.

85. (New) The system as recited in Claim 84, wherein the centralized control site generates a series of camera control instructions instructing at least one of the plurality of video monitoring devices to move to a series of predefined positions.

86. (New) A video surveillance and monitoring system, comprising:

a private network means for enabling communication with surveillance cameras corresponding to monitored sites; wherein at least two surveillance cameras correspond to distinct monitored sites; and

a centralized control site means, including at least one server means, said at least one server means being coupled to said private network and to a public network, said at least one server means being operative to initialize communications between the surveillance cameras and at least one off-site client workstation coupled to said public network, to coordinate the retrieval of video images from all said surveillance cameras, to produce said retrieved video images as live images to the at least one off-site client workstation, and to enable off-site client workstations to effect communication with selected surveillance cameras, wherein the off-site client workstation cannot initialize communication with the surveillance cameras.

87. (New) The system of Claim 86, wherein said private network means is a virtual private network configured over a public network.

88. (New) The system of Claim 86, wherein said private network means is coupled to a camera server and said camera server is coupled to one or more surveillance cameras.

89. (New) The system of Claim 88, wherein said one or more surveillance cameras produces composite NTSC video signals and wherein the camera server is operable to capture the NTSC video signals and convert the captured NTSC video signals.

90. (New) The system of Claim 86, wherein one of said surveillance cameras comprises a self-contained Web server and network camera.

91. (New) The system of Claim 86, wherein said public network is a public Internet network.

92. (New) The system of Claim 86, wherein said at least one server means is operative to repeatedly store live video image data to a file that is retrievable by a client workstation.

93. (New) The system of Claim 92, wherein said at least one server means is operative to write live video image data to a temporary file and to rename said temporary file to said file that is retrievable by a client workstation.

94. (New) The system of Claim 86, wherein said at least one server means is operative to receive and process a camera command control code that identifies a user's desired type of camera adjustment.

95. (New) The system of Claim 94, wherein said camera control code identifies an absolute pan-tilt-zoom control.

96. (New) The system of Claim 94, wherein said camera control code identifies a relative pan-tilt-zoom control.

97. (New) The system of Claim 94, wherein said at least one server means is operative to receive and process an encoded Internet Protocol address of a camera server.

98. (New) The system of Claim 94, wherein said at least one server means is operative to convert a received camera control code to a binary-coded command string and to forward said binary-coded command string to an identified surveillance camera.

99. (New) The system of Claim 98, wherein said binary-coded command string is forwarded to a camera server, which in turn forwards said binary-coded command string to a surveillance camera.

100. (New) The system of Claim 98, wherein said binary-coded command string is forwarded to a self-contained Web server and network camera.

101. (New) The system of Claim 98, wherein said binary-coded command string is forwarded to a separately-addressable device that is solely responsible for receiving camera control commands.